A
ERMON
Preach'd before Their
AJESTIES
In Their CHAPPEL at
St. JAMES's
The 25th. Sunday after *Pentecost*,
November 17th. 1686.

By *J. D.* of the Society of *Jesus*.

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The 25th. *Sunday* after *Pentecost.*

Math. XIII. *ver.* 31.

Simile est Regnum Cœlorum Grano Sinapis.

The Kingdom of Heaven is like to a Mustard-seed.

ONe of the greatest, and one of the least of things, Sacred MAJESTY, this morning Arrest my Thoughts; The Kingdom

of Heaven, and a Muſtard-ſeed. Had any but the Divine Author, deviſed this Parable, as the World now goes, the Propoſer, with your Pious, not over-wiſe, would have paſs'd for a diſparager of Heaven, for a Profaner of the Pulpit, and with your Worldlings, not over-charg'd with Piety, that might have prov'd the Subject of Railery, which coming from *Chriſt*, is a Sacred Myſtery, and ground of Reverence.

Hence we may learn, not to cloſe with firſt, and therefore often falſe appearances; an over-ſight incident to Spirituals, not too profound, and to pretenders to Wit, not too Spiritual. Great things have a proportion with little, and little with great; a bit of Leven, a Muſtard-ſeed, with the Kingdom of Heaven, witneſs the preſent Goſpel. Nothing ſo minute, nothing ſo remote, nothing ſo familiar, which

to

to a well disposed mind, may not prompt Devout, and Pious Cogitations.

Simile est Regnum Cœlorum grano Sinapis; *The Kingdom of Heaven* (what more considerable?) *is like unto a Mustard-seed*; what more despicable? But if the one so great, the other so little, between so great and little, what similitude can there be? I crave your patience, whilst in requital, I endeavour to work it out.

God alone is truly great, and by a reference to God, all other things are great, and little. He's truly great, because as the Royal Psalmist pronounceth, *Psal.* 144. *ver.* 3. *Magnitudinis ejus non est finis*; *His greatness has no End*: For greatness where it ends, ceases to be great, so that a property of greatness is, either to have no end, or to increase.

The Muſtard-ſeed is one of the leaſt of Grains, True; yet conſigned to the Earth, when it ſeems buried, it revives; it riſes above the reſt of Herbs, becomes a Tree, ſmall in its ſelf, great in its increaſe; The Kingdom of Heaven is like to its increaſe, the Kingdom of Heaven ever improves.

For, take the Kingdom of Heaven for the Seat of Eternal Felicity, take it for Chriſt, take it for the preſent State of the Church, take it for Faith, take it for Charity, take it for the Goſpel. This Kingdom, now great, was little; great in being, little in beginning. Heaven, diſ-peopled by the fall of the rebellious Spirits, grew ſmall. *Chriſt* in *Bethlehem* had his Crib. The Church was once an Infant; Faith, Charity, and the Goſpel, were confined to a few followers of Chriſt: Behold the ſmallneſs of the Muſtardſeed.

Since

Since the coming of *Chriſt*, Heaven is grown Populous, and *Chriſt* Glorious. His Church, Faith, Charity, and the Goſpel, though now and then kept down by oppoſition, are evermore vigorouſly branching forth, *a mari uſque ad mare, from Sea to Sea, Pſal.* 21. *v.* 8. Behold the increaſe, to the verifying *Chriſt*'s words, *Simile eſt Regnum Cœlorum grano Sinapis*; *The Kingdom of Heaven is like unto a Muſtard-ſeed.*

The *Kingdom of Heaven* is the Kingdom of God; And the *Kingdom of God*, as our Saviour tells us, *Luke* 17. *ver.* 21. *is within our ſelves*; *Regnum Dei intra vos eſt.* It is not the Place or Region, it is the Subjects, which make the Kingdom. We are the Kingdom of Heaven, but like the Muſtardſeed we muſt increaſe; And this increaſe, grounded on the true meaſure of *great* and *little*, ſhall be the Subject of my Diſcourſe; having firſt im-

implored the Divine Aſſiſtance, by the Interceſſion of the Glorious Virgin, who little in her own Eye, grew to be ſo great, as to be Mother of God, and Queen of Heaven. *Ave Maria.*

Simile eſt Regnum Cœlorum grano Sinapis,
The Kingdom of Heaven is like to a Muſtard-ſeed.

THE *Kingdom of Heaven* is within our ſelves; like the *Muſtard-ſeed* we muſt increaſe; and to increaſe, we are to frame a true meaſure of great and little. To paſs from equal to equal, is no increaſe; to paſs from great to little, is to decreaſe; to Increaſe, is to riſe from leſs to more, from little to great, from great to greater.

Now in order to this, my firſt reflection is, That *Chriſt* ſays, *The Kingdom of Heaven is like unto a Muſtard-ſeed;*

ſeed; he ſays not it is equal. Between *little* and *great*, ſimilitude there may be, Equality there can be none. Though our Saviour then likens the *Kingdom of Heaven* to a *Muſtard-ſeed*; it follows not that Men may equal the Muſtard-ſeed of Earthly things to the *Kingdom of Heaven*. No, it only enſues, That like the *Muſtard-ſeed* they muſt increaſe.

My ſecond Reflection is, That one of the diſorders which reign in this ſinful World, and which obſtructs our increaſe in Virtue, Piety, and Religion, the Head and Source, from which all our calamities flow, is a falſe meaſure of *great* and *little*; This occaſions a wrongful eſtimate of things, ſo that what to the partial Eye of depraved ſenſe and humour, appears *great*, though *little*, and *little* though *great*, to our abuſed Reaſon, is apt to appear the ſame;

ſame; and Men, becoming unjuſt prizers, in place of increaſing by paſſing from *little* to *great*, decreaſe by falling from *great* to *little*, to the diminiſhing the *Kingdom of Heaven*, and augmenting the Kingdom of Darkneſs.

Hence it is, that Virtue is forced to retreat, and yield to Vice; True Glory to a Shadow. Hence it is, that a never-failing Bliſs gives way to momentary content, Heaven to Earth, Eternity to Time. Hence it is, that the Soul goes at ſo low a rate, for *little*, obſcure, or nothing. Hence it is that the Body is proclaim'd the ſubject of courtſhip, admiration, and Worſhip, as enormous a folly, as to prefer the husk before the Seed, or the courſe and rough Shell to the rich and noble Pearl which lodges in it. The Soul, the Soul, though ſeemingly *little* is *great*, and

and the firſt ſtep to its increaſe, is to know its own greatneſs.

Dim Antiquity ſitting in the Shade of its Native Ignorance, without the light of Faith, could ſee no further, than what was groſs and material, and therefore, thought it ſaid enough to enhance the dignity of Man, by entituling him *Microcoſmus, the little World.* A Title bearing ſomething of glorious, and flattering many a fancy; yet taking it into due conſideration, barely as it lies, without other conſtruction, I cannot but recede from the common Vogue; For if we take Man for the Body alone; Man, I cannot deny, may paſs for a little World, keeping a proportion with the greater, which environs it: The Head and Breaſt may be reſembled to the Heavens; the Heart and Brain, to the ſo much influencing Planets, Sun and Moon; his Eyes to the

Stars, his waking to the Day, his Sleep to the Night; the Circulation of his Blood, to the conſtant returns of Rivers to the Sea from whence they ſprung; the reſt of the Body to the Earth. All well. But can the Body alone, that debaſing part of Man, with Truth and Juſtice be termed Man? You'l tell me, no; And if not, though the Body may be ſtil'd a little World, Man cannot. It is below his worth and greatneſs. Man, if a World, he is a great one; and this World which encompaſſes his Body, confronted with Man, is but little. It is not vainly to boaſt, it is not to Hyperbolize, it is to raiſe a juſt conceit of a Soul ſo much depreſs'd in our eſteem. I ſay all this, and I ſay no more than what reaſon upholds. Will you have the proof? I draw it from what is undeniable: For if we ſpeak even of greatneſs in extent,

tent, in which this World ſeems to exceed: That is greater, which containeth; that which is contained, is leſs: on this account the Body is called a *little World*, becauſe encloſed; the encloſing World, the greater. Is it not ſo? can any deny it? None. I take then for granted what none deny, and upon this bottom carry on my Diſcourſe.

Doth not the mind of Man outreach the narrow limits of the Earth? Doth it not upon the wings of ſpeculation, ſoar above the Heavens? Doth it not ſurvey, meaſure, and gather the World in a Thought? This large, this vaſt, this immenſe Univerſe, doth it not bind it within a few lines? doth it not impriſon it in a paper? doth it not caſt it in a Map? The revolutions of the Spheres, and motions of Stars? doth it not confine them, and lay them before your Eyes in a Globe? In this

like unto its Divine Maker, of whom become a new born Infant, to redeem us, the Church ſings: *Mundum pugillo continens, in his little fiſt he bears a World.* And have not I juſt cauſe to ſay, the Soul of Man is greater than the World? I ſay nothing of the power of his memory, making things paſt to be preſent; I mention not the force of his Intellect, tranſcending the groſsneſs of Bodies, and working upon Spiritual Beings, and Abſtracts, walking in the ſpaces of Gods Immenſity, and queſtioning poſſibilities. I let alone the natural Appetite of the Will, ever bending and aſpiring to Eternity, all evidences of its refined, ſpiritual, and immortal exiſtency. I contain my ſelf within the bounds of a palpable way of Reaſoning, and am confounded; when I conſider the mean value we frame of a Soul, the high eſteem we nou-

nouriſh of this World, as if our whole riſe, and increaſe, depended on the progreſs we make in it. Alas! Alas! its Men that enoble the World, the World cannot enoble Men: If the Kingdom of Heaven be like unto a *Muſtard-ſeed* as to increaſe, this World is like to a *Muſtard-ſeed* without increaſe; For compared with Heaven, this World is ſmaller than a *Muſtard-ſeed*; I wiſh it had the virtue to quicken our Reaſon, that it has to open our Brain. Give me leave once more to reaſon it thus:

Have you never addreſs'd your ſelf to a *Sun-Dyal*, to ask the hour of the day; You have, and that often. Know then, that very ſhadow, which counts each minute, in every moment gives light, to this important Truth. Your ador'd Earth, what is it think you, O Idolaters of Terrene greatneſs,

com-

compared to Heaven? Take notice I beſeech you, of what the Dyal makes out. This Earth, in compariſon of Heaven, even in bulk and extent, is leſs than a *Muſtard-ſeed*; Let not the propoſition I ſo boldly advance, ſurpriſe you; I impoſe not upon you, I vent nothing but real Verity. Conſult the Learned, they'l inform you, it is no more than the point of a Needle, than the Centre of a Circle; they'l farther inſtruct you, that on this ſuppoſal, the whole Art of Dyaling relies. The Art, as experience makes out, when rightly practis'd, never faileth, never deceiveth; nor can the ground, on which it depends, be fallacious.

Ah Mortals! Mortals! it is not this lower World, it's your deluded Ambition is great. This Earth on which your Glory builds, this Sea on which your Avarice Sayls, is but an

Attom,

Attom, is but a Point in *paragon* of Heaven. *Punctum eſt* (ſays the moral Philoſopher) *in quo bella geritis, it is but a point on which you War, O Romans,* it is but a *point* on which your Martial Forces draw up, March, and Randezvous; it is but a *point* on which your War-like Inſtruments reſound: It is but a *point* over which your Victorious Eagles fly. Subdue Countries, Fetter the Liberty of Nations, Colour your Purples in the blood of Dying Monarchies; Let *Europe*, *Aſia*, and *Africa*, draw your Triumphal Chariots: Let *America*, (when known) bring up your Glorious Train, you'l then be Great, you'l be Maſters, you'l be Lords of a World, *terrarum Domini.* You'l have gain'd your *point*; And what is it? what is it? a *point*, a *point*; for no more is the World to Heaven then a *point*; *punctum eſt*, make much

much of little, ſince you know not to make much of what is Great, Heaven, your Soul, God.

But ſo many Empires are paſt, the *point* remains no more theirs: *Ecce gentes quaſi ſtilla ſitulæ*, exclaims the Prophet *Iſa. chap.* 40. *ver.* 12. *Behold the Nations like a drop of a Bucket.* A drop, a drop; behold the increaſe of the Adorers of the World, the drop is often puff'd into a bubble, a pleaſant ſight to the Eye, but ſoon breaks, and vaniſhes; *ecce Gentes, behold your Nations*, your Gentiles, your Heathens, your livers without the fear of God, forgotten of Heaven, aſpiring to nothing but Earthly Promotion; they riſe with the inconſtant Bucket of Fortune, to drop and plunge into a deluge of Miſery.

Punctum eſt; and if the main, if the whole, be but a *point*, what muſt it's Divi-

Diviſions and Sub-diviſions, Sections and Sub-Sections, prove to be? Your Cottages, your Rights of Common, your Copy-holds, Free-holds, Tenements, Mannors, *&c.* what are they, but the Fractions of a *point*, in one removal from nothing? And yet, and yet, How many! how many! *injurious* to Themſelves, *unmindful* of Heaven, *ungrateful* to God, ſpend their *deſires*, conſume their *loves*, and caſt away their *thoughts* on tranſitory *Trifles*, and *Joys*? As if enſlaving themſelves to Fleſh and World, ſo far beneath the noble Nature of a Soul, could add to their greatneſs. What Suits? what Animoſities? what Feuds? what a living like Canibals, even amongſt Chriſtians? what endeavours to depreſs and devour each other; and all for the ſmall part of a *point*? *Punctum eſt*, and that not durable.

I have contained my Diſcourſe within the the bounds of Natural Reaſon; But if you'l have the true value of a Soul, open the Eyes of a *lively Faith*, ſee your *Creator* become a *Redeemer*, ſee your God dying upon a *Croſs*, and remember that *Blood*, that *Death*, of Infinite worth, are the Price and Ranſome of your Soul. A little reſpit, and I come in my ſecond part to ſolve an Objection of a Worldling.

Simile eſt Regnum Cœlorum Grano Sinapis, The Kingdom of Heaven is like to a Muſtard-ſeed.

IN my firſt part I have made it my endeavour, to ſet forth the diſparity that runs between this World, and a Soul; and by conſequence, That Man cannot aſpire to an increaſe, by levelling his thoughts at any thing this World

World affords, a world ſo little, ſo vain, ſo unconſtant.

But I fear a Melancholly dumpiſh Fit has ſeiz'd you, ſo are you out of humour with the World; Methinks I hear one of thoſe ſay, who affect Wit, by a nauſeous drolling at Piety; I apprehend, you Preachers, heat your ſelves to little Purpoſe. We are of a cooler temper, we have not ſo much of the *Muſtard-ſeed*, as to take ſnuff at the World for every Impreſſion, threat of Hell, or name of Heaven. Heaven and Hell are things remote.

We live in the World, to riſe, and increaſe: And to this end, we ſtudy to foot ſure; *Faith* and *Religion*, we know, have a fair ſtroke for the other World, but have forfeited many a Loyal Life, Eſtate, and Fortune in this; we have a Family to provide for, our ſelves; We muſt live according to

our Birth and Quality. In a word, make Piety and Religion, our increaſe and Intereſt upon Earth, and we will ſoon be Saints for Heaven.

You have ſpoke like what you are, with much Prophanity, little Wit, and no Reaſon; By all which, the coolneſs of your temper diſcovers it ſelf. Heaven and Hell, you tell me, are things afar off; and I would have you know, that Heaven is no farther off, than you'l make it, and Hell perhaps, is nearer than you think it. You ſay you live in the World, great news! I thought you had liv'd out of it; For thoſe that live in the World like Men, and govern themſelves with Faith and Reaſon, are ſenſible they are placed here to ſerve God, and work their Salvation. You'l foot ſure; and can there be ſure footing in the ſlippery way of Vice? You are to provide for a *Poſte-*

rity,

rity, and are you therefore to neglect an *Eternity*? But you must live according to your Birth and Quality: And at the holy Font of Baptism, were you not regenerated to be the Heirs of Heaven, and qualified to be the Children of God; You bid me make Piety and Religion your Interest upon Earth; and is it not the greatest of Interests, that by the pious Exercises of True Religion, you may purchase the unvaluable Treasure of *Heavenly Bliss*? But your meaning is, make Piety and Religion your way to Riches, Honour, and Greatness upon Earth, and then you'l be Saints for Heaven. I understand you. In place of your buying Heaven, youl'd have Heaven buy you. But let me tell you, Heaven admits of no such Saints, who will not venture the few and vain satisfactions of this World, to secure their Soul, the pos-

session

ſeſſion of God, and a happy Eternity.

Quid prodeſt homini? It's our Saviour expoſtulates the caſe, with too raſh Followers of a Sinful World, *ſi totum mundum lucretur, animæ vero ſuæ detrimentum patiatur*; *What is a man profited, if he gain the whole World, and loſe his own Soul?* A preſſing Inſtance: *quid prodeſt, where is the profit?* where the Income? where the pretended increaſe, ſuppoſe one *gain the World, and loſe his Soul?* Anſwer if you can. The propoſal is clear and urging. Where the loſs is ſo much exceeding, you'l tell me, as that of the Soul is, there can be no profit, in the gain even of a World.

Mat. 16. ver. 26.

You ſpeak well; it is the current and obvious Expoſition, abundantly confirming the preſent Truth. Yet ſpending ſeveral reflexions upon theſe words. Something, methinks, I diſcover in them more, than at the firſt ſight ap-

appears. For as the caſe is ſtated, the ſame Man is the gainer, the ſame the loſer, a *gainer of the whole World, and a loſer of his Soul.*

Should you queſtion me: *quid prodeſt, where is the profit?* I ſhould incline to anſwer, in not being a loſer, of both World and Soul; becauſe, as the caſe ſtands, though loſer of his Soul, he's gainer of the World. A fallacy, a fallacy, ſupported only by the ignorance of what the loſs of a Soul is; And Chriſts words furniſhes me with this retortion: By the loſs of his Soul he loſes himſelf; now the gainer being the ſame as the loſer, both are loſt; and themſelves being loſt, they are at a total loſs. At the loſs of a World, loſs of Soul, loſs of God, O what loſſes! Let World then be forfeited, ſo it be with the ſaving of our Soul, and the

gain

gain of Gods favour. It is but juſt, no loſs, but an increaſe.

Miſ-interpret me not, as if I were for the neglect of Employments and Concerns; I know the good government of the World, requires Application to Worldly Affairs. I am not ignorant, that pretenſions to increaſe of Fortune, by way of Virtue and Merit, are Duties juſtly challenged by Gods Vicars at your hands. But then be pleaſed to remember, your firſt obligation is to God, your chief imployment to regulate your proceedings, by his Laws; from Him you had your Being, from Him you muſt have your increaſe. Religion is not to be ſway'd by Interſt, but Intereſt by Religion; Paſſion is not to govern Reaſon, nor Reaſon to queſtion Gods Commands; Juſtice muſt neither be daunted, nor brib'd,

brib'd, by what this World may propoſe. In a word, for a *point*, and leſs than a *point*, be it Earthly Honor, be it Wealth, be it Pleaſure, we are not to loſe our Soul; to our everlaſting loſs, decreaſe and perdition. Otherwiſe you will repent when it is too late, and when your Tears will only water, and not waſh away the Guilt of a Sinful Life.

Too late, too late, the Unrighteous cry out, in the Book of *Wiſdom*; *Laſſati ſumus in via iniquitatis & perditionis*, *We are tired out in the way of Iniquity and Perdition*; *Ambulavimus vias difficiles*, *We have walked rough ways*; *Viam Dei ignoravimus*, *We knew not the way of the Lord*: Too long deferr'd a Repentance, forced by Anguiſh and Torment, but no Remedy. *Laſſati ſumus*, *We are tired.* And why? If Sin and Iniquity tired you, why were Chap. 5. ver. 7.

you not tired with Iniquity and Sinning? *Vias difficiles Ambulavimus, You have trod hard ways*; And why did you not *foot* the easier paths of Righteousness, to the peace of your Conscience, and quiet of your Souls? *Vias Domini ignoravimus, We were ignorant of the ways of the Lord*: And how so? Was not the way of the Lord revealed, and open to you, as well as to others? Fond Complaints! Fruitless Excuses! Affected Ignorance! You would not know, what you would not perform; you hated Truth, to embrace Vanity: Interest was your Religion, Ambition your Guide, and not Piety; Prophanity your Rule, and not Devotion; you enslav'd Faith to Sense, Reason to Passion, Soul to Body, and by a false Perspective representing unto your selves, *great* for *little*, and *little* for *great*, you aspired to settle your Greatness

neſs and Happineſs in a Contemptible World, by relinquiſhing God; And whereas, like the *Muſtard-ſeed*, raiſing your ſelf *from little* to *great*, to God, to Eternal Bliſs, by your own increaſe, you ſhould have increaſed the Kingdom of Heaven: Falling from *great* to *little*, you have made an acceſſion to the Princedom of Torment. And now *quid prodeſt, quid prodeſt?* what doth it avail you? what doth it avail you, to have maſter'd a World? The World is where it was, and you in Hell.

Crucior in hac flamma, exclaims the Rich Man, we commonly call *Dives*. *I am tormented in this Fire*: Where our Saviour, bringing in *Abraham* and *Dives* diſcourſing together, emboldens me to put in a Word to my purpoſe, and ſo end. Good News, O *Dives!* from the other World. And what, ſays he, are the *Tydings* of the other

World to me, who am in pain, but painful? Your Children are jocund. And I, ſighing: They peaceable enjoy the Riches, the Titles, the Honours, with ſo much Toil thou entaileſt upon them. And my Inheritance are gnaſhing of Teeth, a *never-dying Worm*, Reproach and Ignominy. That Pallace of which, *Wealth* laid the firſt Stone, by Magnificency the Architect is now compleated. And I, unhappy dwell in a Dungeon of Horror and Darkneſs: The Gardens you deſign'd are curiouſly divided, the Walks laid out, the Flowers breath a conſtant Spring and Paradiſe: And here in ſtench I am chain'd, only permitted to walk with my diſmal Fancy from torment to torment. Comfort, O *Dives*, thoſe little *Cypreſſes*, all thrive and are grown up, to defiance of the ſcorching Sun. And I burn; Your Fountains run and

ſport,

ſport, your Waterworks Play to admiration within your ſhady Groves; and neither Shade, or a drop of Water have I to temper my exceſſive Flames. That Wilderneſs you planted with ſuch exquiſit art, is grown up into a Labyrinth, where pleaſure has loſt its ſelf, to be found by all that enter; And I am loſt, ſays he, in the inextricable Labyrinth of Fire, of Torment, of a woful Eternity. I burn, I burn, and burn I muſt for ever. *Cruciar in hac flamma*; Such, beloved Brethren, is the apparent *increaſe*, and real *decreaſe* of thoſe, who value *Intereſt* above *Religion*, their own Humours, above Gods Precepts; Body above Soul, Vice above Virtue, and Earth above Heaven; and ſo it ends, without ever finding an end of miſery. By an oppoſite way of living, let us change the *decreaſe* into an *increaſe*, by a right eſtimate of what is Truth, and what

FINIS.